



HOUGHTS
IN SONG.

By CHARLES R. DODGE.

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THOUGHTS IN SONG.





HOUGHTS

IN



ONG.

BY

CHARLES R. DODGE.

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TO MY WIFE,
FOR WHOM CHIEFLY THIS LITTLE
VOLUME HAS BEEN PREPARED,
THE FOLLOWING PAGES ARE
MOST AFFECTIONATELY
INSCRIBED.



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INTRODUCTORY.

Poet I alas! am none,
But my songs are all my own;
Untaught songs, that while I sing
The reward of pleasure bring.
So, the bird upon the spray,
Pouring forth rich melody
From his little upturned throat,
Finds a pleasure in each note;
And among the busy throng
Some may listen to the song,
Feeling but the joy it brings,
Knowing not the bird that sings.

BY THE SEA.

(A Recovery.)

Roll on thy blue waves and dash them to
spray,

'Gainst the bold rocky cliff that defies thee,
oh! sea;

From the turmoil of life I have stolen away,
To dwell all alone with my thoughts and
with thee.

With the warm sun above, the breeze on
my cheek,

I list to thy music so grand, oh! sea;
And I watch the white sails of the fishing
fleet,

That shimmer between the horizon and me.

O'er the wild waste of waters my vision
I strain,
Far over—beyond thy white sails, oh! sea;
And my heart is filled with a secret pain,
A longing I fain would utter to thee.

The dear dreams of youth I recall again.
With their visions of brightness that long
since have fled;
And I sigh for the hopes that were cher-
ished in vain,
Fond hopes, like the autumn leaves, fallen
and dead.

Far o'er thy blue waters, far into the sky
So cloudless above thee, beyond thee, oh! sea;
I gaze through the tear-drop that starts to
my eye,
'Till lost to the present, myself, and to thee.

'Till lost to the past with its promises fair;
'Till hopes and heart-longings, alike, are
forgot;

'Till my dream-vision paints on the thin
empty air,

The picture that often my fancy hath wrought.

Ah! poor heart, drink deep, for long ages
shall roll,

Like the ocean before thee so mighty and
vast,

Ere reality's finger shall point on her scroll
To one vision of brightness like this that
has passed.

And the breakers dash on, while the spray
jewels fall

Back to thy great heaving bosom, oh! sea;
But deep in mine own my hope-treasures,
all,

Will forever lie hidden from earth and from
thee.

EVENING.

Evening shadows thickening o'er
Tell the day is nearly passed;
And with twilight's peaceful hour,
Softly night comes on at last.

Long ago the king of light
In the purple-clouded west,
Coldly bade the world good night,
Softly sinking then to rest.

Gathering darkness, near and far,
Drapes her curtains, one by one;
Fastening here and there a star,
'Till the glorious work is done.

Now the moon, pale queen of night,
 Rising in her borrowed sheen;
 Peeping o'er yon mountain height,
 Gazes down upon the scene,

Coyly hiding now her face
 Under yonder cloudy veil,
 Then, assuming queenly grace,
 Softly beams o'er hill and dale.

Save the cricket, nought is heard;
 Silently the night comes on;
 All is still—no song of bird—
 E'en the flow'rs to sleep have gone.

The noisy, busy hum of day
 Ceased, as day drew to its close;
 And like a weary child from play,
 Nature sinks in sweet repose.

TUBEROSE.

From all the flowers I e'er have seen
I'd choose thee for my summer queen;
Sweetest flower, to me, that grows,
Fragrant Tuberose.

For thou seem'st above them all,
Nodding from thy stem so tall,
Swaying with each breeze that blows,
Graceful Tuberose.

Some are sweet, and others fair;
Thou art both beyond compare,
For no flower thy perfume knows,
Fair, white Tuberose.

AN ENTOMOLOGIST IN COLORADO.

(A Rocky Mountain Sketch.)

“Run? thunder ‘n lightnin’! I’ll just bet
My pile of yaller dust on that—
Right there the durned bug-eater* set
As sly and knowin’ as a cat
Watchin’ that ar’ hole in the ground.
‘Hello! buggy,’ sez I.—I came
A little nigher—‘What ye found?
And what’s his edicated name?
Some new varmint?’ ‘There he sot,
A pair o’ tweezers in one hand,
A bottle on the ground—You’d thought
He’d struck a lead there in the sand.
‘Caught any yit?’ sez I. Just then
A yaller jacket showed a phiz
Above board—buggy at him, when,
Out flew five hundred right at his—

*In Rocky Mountain parlance a worthless fellow is a “bug-eater.”

Run? thunder 'n lightnin'! Well, I'm sore
For laughin' to see the cuss git—
Clare into camp—and what is more,
He ha'n't got that ar' bottle yit!"

AUGUST IN THE CITY.

I'm tired of living in the heat and the dust,
With toil and vexation from morning till
 night,
For the long summer day brings at eve no
 sweet rest,
And comfort and pleasure are banished from
 sight.

Oh! I long for a run in the beautiful fields:
To wander by brooksides, and idle away
In that exquisite romance that dream-life
 e'er yields—
From sunrise to sunset—each beautiful day.

Leave the struggle for fame to recognized
 worth,
Or pursuit of the pleasures that wealth seems
 to give,
And on the kind bosom of dear mother
 earth
My weary head lay, and forget that I live;

To be my own master—ay! a kind one
 I'd be—
And live like the birds, or the wild sum-
 mer flowers;
To feel with all nature that I too was free;
But ah! such rare pleasure can never be ours.

CROQUET.

He sits beside the pretty lass,
While balls and mallets 'round them lay
Where they were left, upon the grass,
When at Croquet.

Her dimpled hand upon his arm
Lay softly and confidingly;
But yet, for all there is no harm,
It's not Croquet.

That arm steals gently 'round her waist—
How strange that she should let it stay—
Ah! now I understand their haste
To leave Croquet.

She rests her head—take care, young miss.

Too late—ah! me, that's just the way:

The naughty fellow stole a kiss.

If that's Croquet,

I rather think I'd like the game.

A MYSTERY.

You speak to me of death. And what is
death?

A pausing of the tired heart and breath;
A gentle closing of the eyes in sleep,
A dreamless sleep that will its silence keep.

No more? A laying of the head to rest;
A folding of the hands upon the breast;
A grave—perchance a wild neglected spot,
Where only fair flowers breathe, “not quite
forgot.”

And is this all, when pulse shall cease to
beat?

And eyes no longer fair earth-scenes shall
greet?

A few fond tears, a softly whispered name,
At most but scrawled upon the page of fame.

And this is all of life—ambitious life,
So filled with hopes and tears, with pain
 and strife;
With breaking hearts, and longings ne'er
 expressed
Or satisfied—a few brief joys, then rest.

Can this be so? The very worm that eats
And revels in our mouldering clay but
 meets
Unmoved its rest within its narrow home,
Feeling full well the bright, winged life to
 come.

Is there a bright and winged life for me?
When from all earthly toil I shall be free?
Or, shall I, like a fading meteor light,
Soon lose existence, all, in awful night?

Oh! yearning soul, thou oft hast answered
me

When music to the heighth of ecstasy
Hath lifted me, till all this poor dumb show
Of life—unsatisfying—lay below;

And, eager, I would fain stretch out my
hand

To grasp the infinite. Oh! far off land,
This nameless void, this yearning of the
heart,

Mysterious, deep, must be of thee a part.

Guard well my steps, oh! Heaven, guide
me aright;

That when to earth I bid a long good-night,
And death my weary head shall lay to rest,
The grave shall ope to regions bright and
blest.

TO LITTLE SPOT.

Bright little Spot,
So innocent, so full of play
And joyous life; ah! who can say
I love thee not?

Thy honest face
Contrasts with Kitten's knowing gaze;
I love thy sprightly, playful ways,
Thy awkward grace.

Dear little Spot,
Play on, for kittenhood is brief;
The full grown cat soon comes to grief,
And is forgot.

A TALE OF A CASK.

On the steamer Alexander,
For New York City bound,
There was a lad whose fate it seemed
In mischief to be found
Two-thirds of the time.

His tricks became annoying
To such a high degree,
For punishment ye Captain
In a water cask put he,
Leaving ye bung out.

That night there was a mighty storm,
Wind blew and thunder roared;
Ye ship it gave a sudden lurch,
Ye cask pitched overboard,
But lit bung-hole up.

Full thirty hours upon the wave
Ye boy thus had to pass,
Before ye cask it washed ashore
Upon ye beach St. Blas,
Pronounced St. Bla.

Ye boy tried hard, then, to escape,
But no one heard his cry;
'Twas all in vain, and in despair
He laid him down to die,
As well as he could.

No, not in vain, some friendly cows
Had noticed this strange sail,
And walking 'round it one of them
In ye bung-hole switched her tail,
It being fly-time.

Ye gods! ye lad he grabbed ye tail
And held with might and main,
While frightened cow two-hundred yards
Ran, bellowing loud with pain,
Down ye beach.

Nor did she stop her mad career,
But went it with a dash,
Till 'gainst a log she struck ye cask,
And knocked it all to smash,
When ye boy rolled out.

Some fishermen upon ye shore,
Who had enjoyed ye fun,
Now came to where ye youngster lay
As hard as they could run,
Under the circumstances.

And now this *ta/e* must have an end—
Of course all very true—
Suffice to say, they picked him up,
And finally brought him to
Appalachicola.

A REVERY

Fading embers now are lying,
Lying scattered o'er the hearth,
And the year is slowly dying,
Dying ere the New Year's birth.

Shadows darkly o'er us falling,
While we whisper hopes and fears;
Voices of the past seem calling
From the graves of buried years.

Steadily the stream is flowing
Onward, onward to the sea;
Each glad New Year coming, going,
Nearer brings eternity.

“OUR BOY.”

To Mrs. J. H. J.—In Memoriam.

Peacefully my boy is sleeping
With the sunlight in his hair,
And his little face so fair
Upward turned to mine—yet sleeping.

Oh! so lovely—do not wake him—
From all sorrow he is free—
Would he might once wake to me
Ere the angels come to take him.

Why am I these sad tears weeping?
He has only gone before,
To open wider heaven's door
For “papa,” “mama.” Cease thy weeping—

Dry thy tears; in goodness God
Doeth all things well,
And some day will tell
Why He led thee 'neath the rod.

TO MY WIFE.

In Absence.

I am lonely to-night, lonely to-night,
Though the coals on the hearth are all aglow,
And the gas burns bright with a steady flow,
Yet I'm lonely, darling, lonely to-night.

I am lonely to-night, lonely to-night,
For my darling is far away from me,
Far among strangers—friends they may be—
And for this I am lonely, lonely to-night.

I am lonely to-night, lonely to-night;
Your bright loving smile in my dreams I see,
And I whisper, darling, come back to me,
Without thee I'm lonely, lonely to-night.

I am lonely to-night, lonely to-night;
Return thou, dearest one, home, home again;
I anxiously wait thy coming, and then,
No longer alone, the evenings how bright!



To my Brothers in "Kappa Iota Upsilon"

Thou mystic signet, badge of gold,
Hast thou thy story ever told?
Or hast thou sworn to keep it well?
A secret thou canst never tell?

In thy fair form what do I see?
Nought, save the cabalistic "three,"
That seems to mark with easy grace
The every feature of thy face

Tell me thy story, and betime
I'll sing it to the world in rhyme;
Hast thou no romance to unfold?
No legend of the knights of old?

Still as the grave!—hast thou not heard
My supplication? Not a word
Responsive to my call, and cold,
Expressionless thy face of gold.

Thy secret, has it ne'er been breathed?
When fame or bright success hath wreathed
Thee with its laurel fresh and green?
And men paid homage to thy sheen?

Or hast thou ne'er on proud knight's breast,
When golden curls and warm cheek pressed
Thy face, lisped softly in her ear
Those mystic words I long to hear?

Ah! like the grave thou ne'er will tell;
I'll ask no more of thee—keep well
Thy charge, and hold forever true
The secrets of thy K. I. U.

IO ELLA

*A souvenir of a twenty-mile ride in 30 minutes on the
Cowcatcher of a locomotive on the Union Pacific
Railroad, through Nebraska*

I

Twined with sunny, golden hair
Of a maiden, bright-eyed, fair,
Silken tie of azure true—
Charming contrast, gold and blue.

II

'Neath this golden badge I twine,
Maiden, now, this blue of thine,
Keeping still together true—
Mine and thine—the gold and blue.

A THOUGHT.

As a weary winged bird
Far o'er the blue wave;
When it spies the bold cliff that protects
its loved nest,
So the mariner tossed
By the tempests that rave,
Hails with joy the first view of the haven
of rest.

When o'er life's changing sea
The dark night cometh on,
And perils and dangers are borne on the
blast,
With what unfeigned joy
We hail the first dawn
Of the morning that tells us all danger is
past!

ANOTHER YEAR.

An Extract from a Reunion Poem

Another year?

Yes, gone, and we are growing old—

Though young, the story soon is told,

And then the bier.

How fast they fly!

These years that swiftly come and go—

We would enjoy, but ere we know

They pass us by.

We meet to part:

A happy hour of boyish fun;

Another fond farewell—'tis done,

And tears will start.

Thus through our age,
Though living in the present, yet
Anticipation and regret
Fill out the page.

SPRING.

With Interlineations by a Grumbler.

Hail! spring, a season of the year
That makes a jest of everything
By me most loved. I hold thee dear
At any price, oh! fickle spring,
For all the joys thou bring'st to me
Alas! are hollow mockeries,
In two-fold measure, lavish, free.
Why should I love thy gushing ways?

The air is laden with the breath
Of dying winter, while the hosts
Of fair flowers, that so late in death
Lay stark, look *blue* as when their ghosts
Seemed sleeping; and the merry bird
Dreams but of June. No song of his
In meadow, or in forest tree is heard.
His little toes are almost *fritz*.

Dame Nature's robes of frost and snow
 (So bad for colds,) as poets sing,
Are changed to green as March winds blow.
 But poets lie, it's no such thing,
And smiling through her April show'rs,
 While yet we grieve for eight weeks lost,
She brings us May, and fruit and flow'rs.
 N. B. Provided there's no frost.

FATHER LAURENCE'S SOLILOQUY.

From the Burlesque of "Romeo and Juliet."

* * * * *

Fath. What is the time of day?

(looking at his Elgin.) Humph! nearly four?

Too early most for breakfast, I declare!

But hold! I'd quite forgot this little care,

As them 'ere laundry folks will wash to-day,

This sack must go to them without delay;

For, as sin must needs have absolution,

So dirty linen needs ablution

To cleanse it from those foul impurities

That make it so unsightly to our eyes.

How true a man is like the clothes he wears,

Sometimes quite perfect, often full of *tares*;

Again how unlike, seemingly the same,

Each with like virtues only in the name;

Oae, perfect, must be holy, but we see

The other *holcy* ne'er can perfect be.

Then, too, a man that's wholly given to
sin

Is like soiled garments with the dirt rubbed in—

He must be cleansed—alas! too often seen,
You wear him out in trying to get him clean.

THE PROFESSOR.

Little cares he for the world, but sits
Till evening, from earliest dawn,
And figures and etches and writes
And the work goes bravely on;

And a monument grows, day by day,
That shall tell to the world his fame
When marble has crumbled away—
And he silently carves his name,

Carves it in Nature's soft lines,
With a graver skilled and true;
And the acid eats till the eye defines
The outline of promise in view.

And the days and the years go fleeting by,
Tasks are finished and new ones set;
Still the end is not, nor draweth nigh—
There are pages unwritten yet.

Pages unwritten that ever will be,
For the longest life is a span—
That his dream may approach reality,
He is working while he can.

TO MY PENCIL.

Come, pencil, I am sad to-day,
Yet know not why;
Help me to drive the thoughts away
That make me sigh.

The summer flowers 'tis true are fair,
Their perfume free,
But then, the flowers most sweet and rare
Bloom not for me.

My hopes have blossomed with the flowers,
Some clambered high;
And how I've waited for the hours
That saw them die.

I wrote my name upon the sands
Down by the sea;
The waves effaced it with rude hands,
And laughed at me.

I'd write it on the scroll of fame,
Could I alone;
But in the splendor of some brighter name,
'T would ne'er be known.

I caught a butterfly, with wings
Of gold, one day;
While I admired the gauzy things
It flew away.

Fair fortune's wings are brighter gold—
I've chased them too:
And when the prize I fain would hold,
Away it flew.

So pencil, all my fancies fade,

I know not why;

And sometimes sunlight brings but shade.

This makes me sigh.

LITTLE MAY.

I

'Neath the maples on the lawn,
When the noon-day sun had gone,
In her carriage, sleeping, lay
Little May.

Brother Fred and play-mate Will,
Near, with voices hushed and still,
Watching, in their quiet play,
Little May.

Beautiful and fair to view—
Will beside her gently drew;
Kissed her as she sleeping lay—
Little May.

II

Twenty years have come and gone;
Boyish Will, to manhood grown,
Thinks no more of childhood's play,
Or little May.

Far from scenes of boyhood bliss,
Mabel claims his first love kiss
Since that happy summer day
With little May.

Happy Will, with manly pride,
Leading forth a fair, young bride,
Finds upon his wedding day
Little May.

A SERENADE.

Twinkling stars in heaven are gleaming,
While soft breezes to thine ear
Whisper, darling, in thy dreaming,
Thy fond lover watches near.

Rosy visions of life's morrow,
Wafted on the wings of night,
Breathing nought to us of sorrow,
Only tell of fond delight.

Wake, my darling, from thy dreaming,
While my love I breathe to thee;
And the fair moon, o'er us beaming
Softly, shall my witness be.

TWILIGHT MUSINGS.

When the day at last is sleeping,
 And the night its vigils keep;
When the stars in heaven are peeping
 From the moon-lit azure deep;

When the little birds have folded
 Their heads beneath their wings;
And the cricket 'neath your window
 Its plaintive ditty sings;

When the night-breeze, gently floating
 Through the casement, fans your brow.
And the eye-lids droop, half closing,
 While the tired head bends low;

When a dreamy blissful feeling
Whispers of bright regions blest.
And soft music, gently stealing,
Lulls the spirit-life to rest;

And when bright angel-visions
Seem to hover 'round your head—
Why, goodness gracious! wake up!
For it's time to go to bed.

THE HAUNTED WOOD.

From the "Legend of Kaynoh."

'Tis midnight, and the waning moon
Shines mildly over wood and stream;
The soft breeze wails a mournful tune
Among the cedars, and they seem
To whisper darkly and to sigh,
As if for deeds committed here
Beneath their shadows, while the cry
Of whip-poor-will falls on the ear
With mournful cadence. In the marsh
Is heard the noisy bullfrog's croak;
Anon, with note discordant, harsh,
An owl pipes forth from yonder oak,
And with the beetle's humming flight,
The cricket's chirp, and brooklet's trill,
And all the voices of the night,
The haunted forest is not still.

EUDAMIA'S FEAST.

From the "Legend of Kayiyon."

First, gather from the fields rare flowers
To tie in graceful knots, and wreathe
In bright festoons your leafy bowers,
So that the very air may breathe
To them sweet welcome. For our feast,
The daintiest food that e'er was seen
By mortal eyes— * * *
The tender leaves of wintergreen,
With its bright berries; drops of dew
That cling like crystals to the tips
Of lily petals; honey, too,
From fair flowers, gathered ere the lips
Of roving bees have robbed their store;
And pollen, taken ere its showers
Of golden grains are scattered o'er
The leaves and grass, from flowers

Ripe to decay; grasshopper eggs,
 Served on a tiny mussel shell;
 For forks, the slender spiny legs
 Of tiger beetles, serving well
 The purpose, while the winged seed
 Of maple trees, plucked by the wind,
 Will make us knives, and acorn cups
 Shall serve as goblets. Who shall find
 And add a mushroom to our store,
 Will doubly please our queen; but go!
 For moments soon make hours; what more
 Our tables need you well must know.

FRAGMENTS.

A TOAST.

Fill high your beakers, boys, here is the
toast.

And stand while we drink—*those that love*
us most.

Our glasses uplifting,
The white foam drifting,
How it sparkles and dances, o'erflowing
again!

With frosty ice clinking—
Ye gods! there's no drinking
To equal a glass of this foaming Cham-
pagne.

JUNE.

I love thee, smiling, happy June,
 Sweet month, when nature's dress
 Is fairest; when the summer moon
 Beams forth in all her loveliness,
 So softly mild; the very air,
 Laden with the breath of sweet flowers,
 Whisp'ring of dream-life; oh! how fair
 Thou seem'st to make this earth of ours!

FAREWELL.

Closing stanza of Reunion Poem

Farewell! for now we part;
 And as we leave this hall
 May each ask in his heart
 That God protect us all,
 And grant—life's journey o'er,
 Its cares and sorrows flown—
 Upon the shining shore
 REUNION 'round His throne.

EPIGRAMS.

TO H. M. D.

On his fastening a baggage-check to his coat

Fast youth, that you should need a check,
Is nothing strange or new;
But then, to see you check yourself
Seems far more strange than true.

TO A FRIEND.

Who loves not wisely, but a considerable number well.

Will gets acquainted with a Miss,
Then talks of love and kisses—
Strikes me, he'll re'er do more than this,
And count his *loves* as *misses*.

TO MATTIE.

An Impromptu on one of her verses.

Thanks! Mattie, for your little rhyme,
 The reading gives me pleasure;
 But hold! dear miss, another time
 Be careful of your measure.

TO MISS W——S.

On her sending a kiss by letter

A maiden's kiss is not amiss
 If from her lips 'tis taken,
 But sent by mail, they ever fail
 Emotions soft to waken.

TO MRS. A. S. C.

And so I *lied*, to state it true,
 Because your question I would parry—
 Sad case, indeed—'twixt serving you
 It lay, or, serving *the Old Harry*.

AN OPEN QUESTION.

Said Kitty to her spouse one day,
"I have the better judgment, any way."
Says he: "to that I give my voice;
A case in point—our marriage choice."



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